

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for conferencing, comprising:  
5 receiving audio signals over a plurality of ports;  
for at least one port,  
determining a dynamic threshold value based on one or more  
characteristics of signals received on the port;  
associating said dynamic threshold value with the port; and  
10 comparing one or more characteristics of signals subsequently received  
on the port to the dynamic threshold value; and  
summing signals received over the plurality of ports, wherein signals received  
on the at least one port whose characteristics have a specified relationship to the dynamic  
threshold value are not contained in the sum.

15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the dynamic threshold value is an energy  
level.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the dynamic threshold value is determined  
20 based on one or more characteristics that comprise energy level.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more characteristics of signals  
subsequently received on the port compared to the dynamic threshold value comprise energy  
level.

25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the specified relationship to the dynamic  
threshold value is that of being less than the threshold value.

30 6. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
identifying which ports are receiving audio signals that contain speech; and

on each such identified port, transmitting a summed signal, wherein said summed signal does not contain signals received on that port.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

identifying which ports are receiving audio signals that contain DTMF tones;  
and

on each such identified port, transmitting a summed signal, wherein said summed signal does not contain signals received on that port.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said step of identifying comprises setting a DTMF detect bit for a signal.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising preprocessing received audio signals by decompressing the signals.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said step of comparing one or more characteristics of signals subsequently received on the port to the dynamic threshold value comprises determining whether a magnitude of a decompressed audio signal is greater than said threshold value.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein said step of decompressing uses  $\mu$ -law decompression.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein said step of decompressing uses A-law decompression.

13. The method of claim 7, further comprising the step of including signals from previously identified ports in said sum after those ports are no longer identified as receiving signals containing one or more DTMF tones.

14. Software for conferencing, comprising:

software for receiving audio signals over a plurality of ports;  
for at least one port,

software for determining a dynamic threshold value based on one or  
more characteristics of signals received on the port;

5 software for associating said dynamic threshold value with the port;  
and

software for comparing one or more characteristics of signals  
subsequently received on the port to the dynamic threshold value; and

software for summing signals received over the plurality of ports, wherein  
10 signals received on the at least one port whose characteristics have a specified relationship to  
the dynamic threshold value are not contained in the sum.

15 15. The software of claim 14, wherein the dynamic threshold value is an energy  
level.

16. The software of claim 14, wherein the dynamic threshold value is determined  
based on one or more characteristics that comprise energy level.

20 17. The software of claim 14, wherein the one or more characteristics of signals  
subsequently received on the port compared to the dynamic threshold value comprise energy  
level.

18. The software of claim 14, wherein the specified relationship to the dynamic  
threshold value is that of being less than the threshold value.

25

19. The software of claim 14, further comprising:  
software for identifying which ports are receiving audio signals that contain  
speech; and

software for, on each such identified port, transmitting a summed signal,  
30 wherein said summed signal does not contain signals received on that port.

20. The software of claim 14, further comprising:  
software for identifying which ports are receiving audio signals that contain  
DTMF tones; and

software for, on each such identified port, transmitting a summed signal,  
5 wherein said summed signal does not contain signals received on that port.

21. The software of claim 20, wherein said software for identifying comprises  
software for setting a DTMF detect bit for a signal.

10 22. The software of claim 14, further comprising software for preprocessing  
received audio signals by decompressing the signals.

23. The software of claim 22, wherein said software for comparing one or more  
characteristics of signals subsequently received on the port to the dynamic threshold value  
15 comprises software for determining whether a magnitude of a decompressed audio signal is  
greater than said threshold value.

24. The software of claim 22, wherein said software for decompressing uses  $\mu$ -law  
decompression.

20

25. The software of claim 22, wherein said software for decompressing uses A-  
law decomposition.

26. The software of claim 20, further comprising software for including signals  
25 from previously identified ports in said sum after those ports are no longer identified as  
receiving signals containing one or more DTMF tones.

27. A system for conferencing, comprising:  
means for receiving audio signals over a plurality of ports;  
30 for at least one port,

means for determining a dynamic threshold value based on one or more characteristics of signals received on the port;

means for associating said dynamic threshold value with the port; and

means for comparing one or more characteristics of signals

5 subsequently received on the port to the dynamic threshold value; and

means for summing signals received over the plurality of ports, wherein signals received on the at least one port whose characteristics have a specified relationship to the dynamic threshold value are not contained in the sum.

10 28. The system of claim 27, wherein the dynamic threshold value is an energy level.

29. The system of claim 27, wherein the dynamic threshold value is determined based on one or more characteristics that comprise energy level.

15 30. The system of claim 27, wherein the one or more characteristics of signals subsequently received on the port compared to the dynamic threshold value comprise energy level.

20 31. The system of claim 27, wherein the specified relationship to the dynamic threshold value is that of being less than the threshold value.

32. The system of claim 27, further comprising:

25 means for identifying which ports are receiving audio signals that contain speech; and

means for, on each such identified port, transmitting a summed signal, wherein said summed signal does not contain signals received on that port.

33. The system of claim 27, further comprising:

30 means for identifying which ports are receiving audio signals that contain DTMF tones; and

means for, on each such identified port, transmitting a summed signal, wherein said summed signal does not contain signals received on that port.

34. The system of claim 33, wherein said means for identifying comprises means  
5 for setting a DTMF detect bit for a signal.

35. The system of claim 27, further comprising means for preprocessing received audio signals by decompressing the signals.

10 36. The system of claim 35, wherein said means for comparing one or more characteristics of signals subsequently received on the port to the dynamic threshold value comprises means for determining whether a magnitude of a decompressed audio signal is greater than said threshold value.

15 37. The system of claim 35, wherein said means for decompressing uses  $\mu$ -law decompression.

38. The system of claim 35, wherein said means for decompressing uses A-law decompression.

20

39. The system of claim 33, further comprising means for including signals from previously identified ports in said sum after those ports are no longer identified as receiving signals containing one or more DTMF tones.